

of their objective clinical resemblance to spondylolisthesis, a condition for which they have been mistaken (Kronig).

Chapter III is devoted to a consideration of Lateral Curvature. Except for an added picture or two it is identical with the same chapter in the first edition. The last edition, like the first, gives in detail two excellent systems of muscle-building exercises. Forcible correction in plaster of paris jackets is touched upon, and the antiquated scoliosis press of Hoffa, an appliance which its inventor discarded nearly a decade ago for the Wullstein machine, is pictured. The deduction is inevitable that the enormous activity of orthopedic surgeons in the study of lateral curvature during the past six years, has, in Dr. Whitman's opinion, been barren of tangible results.

We dissent from this view. In this country the X-ray studies by Bohm of scolioses due to other skeletal asymmetries, of congenital origin, by Lovett in the mechanics of the normal and of the scoliotic spine and by Feiss on the influence of changes in equilibrium and asymmetrical tension on spinal distortions, is of the very first importance. While in Europe, Wullstein of Holle and Lange in Munich have devised efficient methods of treating different phases of this condition. We regret that the subject is too technical and space too limited to admit of our doing more than direct attention to the work of these eminent men.

Dr. Whitman's chapter contains all that the non-specialist student would care to read of theory, pathology and symptoms, and elaborates with his accustomed accuracy the kind of treatment a general practitioner could carry out if he gave himself diligently to it. But there are cases which require more skill than the general practitioner can give, and special methods of treatment for which he lacks the appropriate armamentarium. If these facts are recognized it will be better for both doctor and patient.

Chapter V is devoted to a general consideration of tuberculous disease of the bones and joints. It is on a plane with the chapters on tuberculosis of the spine and of the hip, perhaps the most illuminating twenty pages in the entire book. We do not apologize for making the following excerpts in full: "The tuberculin test, although of some importance from the negative standpoint, is of no particular value as establishing a diagnosis of joint disease, for the reason that tuberculous disease of the lymph glands is so common even among those whose joints are free from disease. For the same reason it is valueless as a test of practical cure." Instances are on record, however, in which a marked local reaction in the form of an exaggeration of the symptoms of joint inflammation followed the exhibition of a dose of tuberculin and cleared up an otherwise doubtful diagnosis.

The book contains no more important paragraph than the following: "From what has been stated of the causes of disease, it follows that the general condition should include, if possible, a change in the hygienic surroundings, relief from the danger of further infection, pure air and proper food. These are as essential in the treatment of tuberculosis of the bones as of other parts.

"The importance of the constitutional treatment of tuberculous disease, more particularly the proper environment in which the greater part of the day and even the night may be passed in the open air, can hardly be exaggerated." It is unfortunate that the printer's art does not admit of variations of emphasis as does the spoken word. Our own disposition would have been to print that paragraph in red ink and in heavy type—anything to attract attention to it and hold it there, for it con-

tains the secret of success or failure in the treatment of tubercular joint lesions.

A method of treating joint lesions and especially tuberculous ones that has of late years come rapidly into prominence is the passive congestion method of Bier. It is briefly considered in the book before us. After mentioning the technic, Whitman continues: "The action of the nervous or passive congestion is, according to Bier, as follows: 1. It increases the formation of fibrous tissue and induces hypertrophy of the bones. 2. It has a bactericidal action in infectious joint disease, notably tuberculosis. 3. It has an absorptive effect on the effused products of disease, and on new formations that check joint motion. 4. It relieves pain and lessens the activity of progressive joint disease."

A hundred pages are devoted to the discussion of "hip disease," this term, as the author hastens to say, being "now limited to tuberculous disease."

**Starr on Nervous Diseases. Organic and Functional Diseases.** By M. Allen Starr, M.D., Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of Neurology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons. New York; ex-President of the American Neurological Association and of the New York Neurological Society. Second edition, thoroughly revised. Octavo, 824 pages, with 282 engravings and 26 full-page plates. Cloth, \$6.00, net; leather, \$7.00 net. Lea Brothers & Co., Philadelphia and New York, 1907.

The first edition of this book dealt only with the organic diseases of the nervous system. The present edition treats in a lucid and helpful manner of the functional troubles as well. The diseases of the ductless glands such as acromegaly, myxedema and exophthalmic goitre have been omitted; also tetanus and the so-called trophic disorders. We doubt the advisability of these exclusions. These diseases, to be sure, are comprised in works upon general medicine, as the author says, but so are the diseases which Dr. Starr's book treats of and often very well handled, too, in Strumpell's book, for instance. A certain disproportion is noted between certain chapters. Neuritis occupies many pages, while to the chapter on syphilis of the nervous system only three are devoted. There is much to be found in the book in different places on the latter very important subject, but this particular chapter is very much inferior to that contained in Oppenheim's treatise.

It is needless to remark that localization, central and spinal, is fully described. In the therapeutic directions there is no suggestion of vitalism, nor does the author indulge a misleading optimism. This good sense is especially conspicuous in the chapters on hysteria and neurasthenia. We think the practitioner will be as satisfied with Dr. Starr's prescriptions as the nature of the diseases will permit.

We found no mention of cervical ribs, among the causes of disease of the trachial plexus. There are a number of misprints in the index and elsewhere. For Mill's Disease, for instance, the reference in the index is to page 512, but it is not to be found there.

The illustrations are abundant. There are perhaps more pictures after Golgi specimens than are necessary or useful, but many others have been judiciously reproduced from other works.

**Insanity Cured by a New Treatment. Details of Twenty-one Cases.** By C. W. Luckling, M. D., Birmingham, '07. Cornish Brothers, Ltd. Price 2 shillings, net.

"The insanity written of in this paper is entirely caused by dropped kidney." "The cause of the in-

sanity is clear. It is toxic and does not depend on the degree of displacement." "The daily interference with the elimination of urine and retention in the prolapsed kidney and ureter causes auto intoxication leading to insanity and other disorders of the nervous system." These quotations show the author's view of the etiology of "Insanity." The New Treatment is of course Nephropexy—"suturing up" of the fallen kidney.

In a large public asylum Luckling examined fifty of the inmates on the female side for "dropped kidney"; he found it in fifty per cent of them. "The cases," he says, "suffered chiefly from melancholia, but mania and dementia also existed." We expected to read in the sequel that a series of nephropexies had depleted that asylum, of these fifty per cent, also a private asylum of the 33 per cent of the women whom he found there with prolapsed kidneys, but from these unfortunates the benefit of nephropexy seems to have been withheld, and together with those whose kidneys are where they ought to be, they may be reserved for ovariectomy or tenotomy of the ocular muscles, or relieved of their eyestrain and insanity by fitting with spectacles. The author observes that suicide is remarkably frequent where dropped kidney exists and some of his patients who were too poor to afford the necessary vigilance got away shortly after the operation and drowned themselves.

Sir Frederick Treves had stated that autopsy showed the kidney to be in its place in cases of suicide where symptoms had existed which Luckling would ascribe to displacement of the kidney; but in this our author has had a fourth year's student convict the great Sir Frederick of an error!

"Out of 22 patients operated upon 21 are cured and one relapsed, the operation in this case not being Goelet's." The patients complained of neurasthenic troubles, were depressed and some of them had hypochondriacal and other delusions. Some of them were such as usually recovered without an operation, but others were of long standing. No allowance is made in any case for the effect of operations per se. In one case described under the heading of "Insanity" the operation was reported as a failure three months after, but recovery 12 months after is ascribed to the surgical treatment. It has been recognized for a long time that nervous and hypochondriacal symptoms may be associated with movable kidney, and that some of the patients are relieved after fixation of that organ; and some of Luckling's cases may be admitted as illustrating this relation. But the triumphant tone with which the title of the book proclaims a great therapeutic discovery, is not justified by its contents. The indiscriminating use of the term "Insanity" suggests a lack of caution in reasoning. We do not wonder when he tells us he has met with opposition and that "false statements" have been circulated. Such was ever the fate of the enthusiast. A list of the titles of his publications, filling three pages, which is appended to his book indicates an ability to wage an inky war for his opinions, and the author may yet in a series of Biographic Clinics, à la Gould, prove to us that the woes of Richard Wagner, George Eliot and Thomas Carlyle were not due to eyestrain, but to dropped kidney, and that spectacles would have been vain, but nephropexy helpful.

#### A DISCUSSION ON PERINEAL TEARS.\*

By John Egerton Cannaday, M. D., Hansford, W. Va.

The author reviews the history of the subject and says: "The literature of the subject is enormous, if not appalling. Innumerable operations have been

\*Published in the American Journal of Obstetrics; Author's Abstract.

proposed and practiced and almost every suture known to man has been tried—all eloquent testimony to the fact that none of the methods are perfect. A perusal of some of the writings on the subject would tend to confuse the mind of the reader with their intricacies, but when shorn of its complexities and reduced to the basic principles of surgery, a perineal tear resolves itself into a comparatively simple matter."

The anatomy of the parts concerned is taken up in full detail, the author believing that a thorough understanding of this part of the subject makes the matter a comparatively simple one to the operator. In speaking of the supports of the pelvic organs, the author says: "A number of widely differing views as to what factors normally enter into the support of the pelvic contents are held by the principal authorities of the world. Some hold that the levator ani, with or without the aid of the other muscles, is the chief power for support. Others ascribe all virtue to the fascia. Some, again, give both muscles and fascia more or less equal credit for accomplishing the work of support between them. Personally, the author believes that the muscles with the fascia act as a composite diaphragm in closing the lower end of the abdominal cavity and in giving support to the pelvic organs. Of the two factors he considers the fascia of major importance; in the anterior abdominal wall we consider the fascia of the utmost importance in the prevention of hernia. The pelvis should not be radically different."

The indications for repair are given and the operation is minutely described. The author shows that the denudation outline is practically that of the capital letter M, the outline of sutures representing the letter Y. The various methods of different operators are described.

The advantages of feeding the patient on minimum amounts of albumen and of locking the bowels for two weeks in the after-treatment of complete tear cases are stated.

#### AN APPEAL TO THE AMERICAN MEDICAL PROFESSION.

By DR. S. A. KNOPF, New York.

On May 8th, the day following the meeting of the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, there appeared in the North American, of Philadelphia, a most sensational article by Mr. Richard J. Beamish, according to which, during the discussion of Dr. Flick's report on medication, I was reported to have advised the killing of dying consumptives quickly and painlessly by heavy doses of morphine and to have admitted that it was my daily practice to do so. It was furthermore said in this article that there had been a bitter debate and that the session adjourned in confusion. These false statements were copied by nearly all the newspapers in the United States, were cabled to Europe and made the rounds in the papers and magazines of England and the whole European continent. In spite of explanations and denials I had sent to the Associated Press, in spite of a strong letter written by Dr. George Dock, the presiding officer of the meeting, and sent to the leading medical journals of America, giving the true version of my remarks, the false statement has continued to be published and re-published and commented upon to the great detriment of the Anti-Tuberculosis crusade all over the world. For example: ignorant consumptives in St. Louis, who had read the sensational lie, refused the visit of the nurses sent to them by the Society for the Relief and Prevention of Tuberculosis. The "St. Louis Republic," which published this news item, said, "Consumptives, since they read that report, apparently have a dread that the visit of the nurse